

Genesis Chapter 3

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"<sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;<sup>3</sup> but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"<sup>4</sup> Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.<sup>5</sup> For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."<sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.<sup>8</sup> And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?"<sup>10</sup> So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."<sup>11</sup> And He said, "Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"<sup>12</sup> Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."<sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."<sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You *are* cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."<sup>16</sup> To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire *shall be* for your husband, And he shall rule over you."<sup>17</sup> Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat *of* it All the days of your life.<sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.<sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return."<sup>20</sup> And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.<sup>21</sup> Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.<sup>22</sup> Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—<sup>23</sup> therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.<sup>24</sup> So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Introduction

So far in Genesis Chapter 1-2 we have discovered some important facts.

1. God created the world in 6 literal 24 hour days.
2. God created the world for the benefit of His created Man.
3. God created Man for a relation with Himself. He only gave Man one rule to obey, and that was NOT to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God gave man an abundance and variety of other fruit bearing trees to eat from.

The consequence for disobedience to the one rule was death.

4. God told man to look after his creation and have authority over it. He was instructed to look after the garden which involved "work". Work was not punishment, it was a delight.

5. God created a woman from man in order to act as somebody who would support and compliment His created man. It was God's decision to do this.

We discovered that the Hebrew meaning for the word helper was "One who supplies strength in the area which is lacking in the helped person."

6. Everything that God created was good and the man and the woman had no knowledge about evil or bad things. They were completely innocent and without sin in their lives.
7. We also discovered that God created a seventh day for the purpose of rest and reflection. Rest for the body of man and reflection about creation and redemption.

With these 7 things in mind we now come to Genesis chapter 3.

In Genesis chapter 3: v. 1 we are introduced to another creature. In the New King James Bible he is called "The serpent". In other parts of the Bible he is called, Satan, Lucifer and the devil.

Who was this creature and where did he come from?

We need to go to Ezekiel Chapter 28 to discover something about this creature.

Ezekiel Chapter 28: v. 12-15. (N.K.J.)

<sup>12</sup> "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. <sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. <sup>14</sup> "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. <sup>15</sup> You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

It these verses we discover 4 important things about Satan.

1. God created Satan as a perfect creature, his beauty was abundant and every precious stone covered him. – v. 12 & v. 13.
2. Satan was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. – v. 12
3. Satan was anointed as a guardian angel to protect the Holy mountain of God –v.14.
4. At some time after his creation Satan was found to have sin in Him. – v. 15.

To discover how Satan managed to corrupt himself with sin we need to go to Isaiah Chapter 14: v. 12-15. (Quote these verses here)

<sup>12</sup> "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! <sup>13</sup> For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; <sup>14</sup> I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' <sup>15</sup> Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

To discover how Satan corrupted himself we need to notice all the "I will" statements in these verses.

Five times Satan said "I will".

Basically Satan wanted to take over heaven and be "LIKE" God.

Satan was determined to replace God with himself.

Satan's heart was bursting with prideful ambition.

There was a problem with Satan's plan. The problem was that God knew all about it. The Bible teaches us that God is "All Knowing "

God called Satan's attitude "SIN".

Because God is perfect, He couldn't put up with Satan's sin as if it did not matter.

Perfection, by its very nature, demands the absence of imperfection.

The Bible repeatedly tells us 3 things about God.

1. God who is "righteous" or right, can have no part with wrong.
2. God's Holiness leaves no room for sin.
3. God who is sinless, cannot tolerate sin in his presence.

God's response to Satan's sin was immediate. Let us go back to Ezekiel Chapter 28: v. 16-17.

<sup>16</sup> "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. <sup>17</sup> "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you.

Before we go into Chapter 3: v. 1 we need to realize that Satan is part of a spiritual world. In order to be visible to the eyes of men and women he needs a physical body to enter and operate from. In the case of Chapter 3 Satan chose the body of a serpent/ snake. It is important to note this when we come later to God's judgement upon Satan and the animal that he used to operate from.

Now we know a little about Satan we can return to the text in Genesis Chapter 3: v. 1.

1. Satan tempts Eve to DOUBT God's word – v. 1.

The first thing that Satan said to Eve in the Garden of Eden was to cast "DOUBT" upon God's word.

In the original Hebrew translation the words are even stronger than the English translation.

Notice carefully that Satan actually twists God's word a little to try and seduce Eve. He makes out that God had prohibited Eve from eating from any of the trees. However there was only one tree that was out of bounds.

It is really important that we realize that Satan is alive and well and still working in our world today.

His primary focus is to try and get people to doubt God's word. He does this in very subtle ways.

We notice in v.2-3 that Eve tried to correct Satan and explained that she was able to eat every fruit in the garden except the fruit from one tree.

However she made one mistake. She added to God's word.

She added the words "Nor shall you touch it."

We are not quite sure why Eve added an extra prohibition to God's word.

It may have been that Adam communicated to Eve about God's prohibition concerning the tree in such a strong way that she added it perhaps for her protection. Nevertheless it was still an addition.

2. Satan lies about the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit and promotes the benefit of being like God when she eats the fruit. V. 4-5.

Satan was not content with doubting God's word, he now denies God's word. Satan called God a liar. He suggested that the reason the tree was forbidden by God was that God feared that Eve might learn too much. Satan mixed truth with error and confused Eve.

It was true that their eyes would be opened and they would know good and evil, but it was false to imply that they would be like God with all His attributes.

Satan denied that there would be consequences from eating the forbidden fruit. He himself knew the consequences of his own rebellion against God.

It is no wonder that Jesus calls Satan the "father of lies"

(John 8: v. 44)

<sup>44</sup> You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Jesus calls Satan a "Murderer" from the beginning. The reason is that his lies led to the death of Eve and Adam.

All human deaths are sourced ultimately from the events in this chapter which make Satan the worst mass murderer of all history.

Once again we see that JESUS accepts Genesis Chapter 3 as real HISTORY.

So we see that Satan's method of operating was threefold.

1. He raised doubts about the wisdom, justice and love of God.
2. He made a direct contradiction of the word of God.
3. He claimed that disobedience to God will result in the highest good.

If we examine the way in which Satan operates in our world today, we will find him operating in the same way.

3. Eve & Adam yield to the temptation of Satan v. 6.

We are told in v. 6 that there were 3 things that caused Eve to sin.

1. The desire of the flesh – the tree was good for food.
2. The desire of the eyes – it was attractive to the eye.
3. The "Pride of Life" – desired to make one wise.

In 1 John Chapter 2: v. 15-17 John warns us that Satan's temptations are still operating today in the same way as they were back in Genesis chapter 3.

(1 John 2: v. 15-17)

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of

life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

So Eve disobeyed God’s word, eat the fruit and immediately gave Adam some fruit to eat and He eat it also.

Adam and Eve had good reason to tell Satan that he was liar and God had spoken the truth. However they chose to believe Satan instead of God. They disobeyed God’s clear instructions and joined the devil’s rebellious army.

It says in James chapter 4 that anybody who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. (The world influenced and controlled by Satan.)

Adam and Eve had rejected a pure, perfect world to experiment with a forbidden one.

4. The first consequences of Adam and Eve’s disobedience – v. 7-8.

The first consequences of their disobedience was being aware of their nakedness and being ashamed of it. If we go back to Genesis chapter 2: v. 25, we will note the following. “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed”

Something had definitely changed in their relationship with God.

They now wanted to cover their nakedness and they sewed fig leaves together to act as a covering.

Why did they try and cover up their “nakedness”?

Perhaps they thought if they fixed up their outward appearance somehow that God wouldn’t notice?

It was definitely Man’s attempt to make things right in a world gone wrong.

There was only one problem with the fig leaf solution. It didn’t work.

Having a good outward appearance did not put right the inner problem of disobedience. The perfection was gone and now there were inner feelings of guilt.

Only guilty people run and hide and that is just what Adam and Eve did.

5. God confronts the disobedient couple – v. 9-13.

The first thing that God does was to call out to Adam. Adam was hiding and God wanted to find him. God said “Where are you?”

Although God knew very well where Adam was hiding, nevertheless He tries to draw out a voluntary repentance from Adam’s disobedience.

Adam owns up to hiding from God and admits that it was because of his nakedness.

God confronts the reason for Adam’s nakedness. Immediately Adam starts the “Blame Game”. He didn’t want to admit his own disobedience, he blamed it upon Eve.

Adam was saying, actually God it was your fault in creating that woman, if you hadn’t done that I would be O.K. It’s not my fault it’s all to do with Eve!

Then God challenges Eve. Eve continues the “Blame Game”. She says it wasn’t my fault, it was that serpent, he deceived me, and it was all his fault that I disobeyed.

6. God pronounces Judgement upon Satan, Adam, Eve and the created world – v. 14- 19.

a) Judgement upon Satan - v. 14-15.

Although the animal, which we will call a snake, was possessed by Satan, nevertheless God punishes the snake as well as Satan.

Although animals are not moral agents, they were created for the benefit of man. When they harm man they are harmed in return.

(Genesis 9: v. 5)

<sup>5</sup> Surely for your lifeblood I will demand *a reckoning*; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

It was important for God to not only Judge Satan but also his instrument of deception.

We are told that the snake was cursed by God. The forms of the movement of this animal were altered by God. Prior to the curse the snake/ serpent looked and moved differently. Although we don't have a picture of what it looked like, it was certainly very different.

The curse involved moving on its belly and eating dust all the days of its life. In fact the snake today actually eats dust. Its forked and flicking tongue is designed to constantly pick up dust from the points of the fork and carry it back into its Jacob's organ in the snake's mouth. However a snake's real wholesome food is other animals. He murders to live. (John 8: v. 44)

After cursing the serpent/ snake, God now deals with the real problem. That is Satan himself. He was the spirit behind the snake.

God said that He was going to put "hostility" between Satan and the woman, and between the woman's offspring and Satan's offspring.

He, referring to the woman's male offspring was going to bruise the head of Satan and Satan was going to bruise the heel of the male offspring.

What is this all about?

Well firstly when it comes to literal snakes, one way to kill a snake is to step on its head and crush it. However while the foot is coming down, the snake might rear its head and bite the heel of your foot. If the snake is non- venomous, that means not poisonous, the bite will bruise but not be fatal. However the crushing of the head of the snake would be fatal.

However there is a much deeper meaning that involves the evil one behind the snake.

Most recent Bible Scholars over the last 50 years see this verse as the first "Messianic Prophecy".

To put it in plain English the verse says that at some future time a male child would be born from the seed of the woman. We have to stop here and identify the child. Notice it is from the seed of the woman. However it is from the seed of a male that we get children. Therefore the Bible is talking about some future supernatural birth that only involves a woman.

This clearly points to the virgin birth, where Mary was chosen to give birth to Jesus, through the work of God's Holy Spirit, planting a seed in the woman. The seed was definitely from the woman in this case and not from the man. The only birth recorded in the Bible in this way was the birth of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

We are told that this male child would crush or bruise Satan's head.

This would be a fatal wound. We are also told that Satan would hurt the child, but only with a strike at the heel. This would be a temporary injury that would heal.

So it seems clear to me that this is the first Messianic Prophecy in the Bible. God was promising to bring somebody into the world in a supernatural way to destroy Satan.

b) Judgement upon Eve ( the woman) – v. 16.

God tells Eve that when she has children it is going to be a painful process.

In a book written by Mary Kassian, called “Women, Creation and the fall” she writes:

“Childbirth is painful. I had read about it and I believed it before the birth of my first child, yet nothing could have prepared me for the intense agony of labor. Labor pain is simply inexplicable to one who has not experienced it.”

Dr. Ronald Melzack, a leading expert in the field of pain, has recently completed research on the intensity of labor pain. He found that on average, labor pain ranks among the severest.”

So clearly the judgement upon Eve and ALL women that followed her was going to be very tough.

However that was not all, there was more.

In the N.K.J. it says “Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you.”

Q. What does this mean?

First of all we need to understand the word, “desire”. The English word “desire” seems positive and even romantic to us English readers. However the Hebrew word is very “NEGATIVE” in its context, made stronger with the word “To rule”.

The same Hebrew word is used in Genesis Chapter 4: v. 7.

<sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.”

God warns Cain that sin is desiring him, but he must rule over it.

So the Hebrew word desire must be counteracted with a will to master this desire.

A Jewish Scholar by the name of “Fruchtenbaum” puts it like this.

“The woman’s punishment is therefore that she is placed into a subordinate role, and the point of Chapter 3: v. 16 is that the woman will desire to rule over her husband who is to master her. She will seek to gain authority over the husband just as sin desired to rule over Cain. Man was already in authority over the woman before the fall, but now she will have a tendency to rebel and try to rule him.”

In other words Marriage was perfect before the fall and now it is a struggle to keep your wives under control!! (That woke up the wives) but you know what I mean.

c) Judgement upon Adam – v. 17-19.

You will remember that last week God put Adam to work in a beautiful garden. It wasn't hard work it was very pleasant. God had given Adam dominion over creation. Everything was wonderful. There were no weeds in his garden.

God punished Adam by punishing the ground. The ground would fight back against him. The thorns and the thistles would start to grow. For Adam to have dominion over the earth would be a constant battle of hard work.

This curse is confirmed in Romans 8: v. 18-22. (New Living Translation)

<sup>18</sup> Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. <sup>19</sup> For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. <sup>20</sup> Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, <sup>21</sup> the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. <sup>22</sup> For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

The last part of the curse was physical death. V. 19b.

And with the thought of death I end my sermon. Not on a sad note of defeat, and thinking about the awfulness of death and separation of loved ones. But on a positive note.

Q. What could possibly be positive about death?

Well in one sense, the curse of physical death does have a benefit to man. It prevents an even worse evil. That is living forever in a state of sin.

What could be more horrible than living in "SIN" for eternity?

The second and most important thing is that death provides the means of redemption, through the physical death of the God Man Jesus Christ. He died on a Cross that we might be set free from the last enemy, death itself.

God loved Mankind so much that in spite of His curse to Adam and Eve, He provided a solution to their problems.

Adam and Eve were cursed but Jesus Christ took the punishment for the whole world as He hung on the cross.

John Chapter 3: v. 16.

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

We all have to face death one day, but if we know and love Jesus as our own personal savior, then we can face death with confidence that it is the entrance to eternal life with Jesus.

It is the entrance to a place called "Heaven" where there is NO DEATH and NO SIN.

Will you believe in Jesus today?